

*C. B. Bass  
Sketches*

# CHATTANOOGA DAILY REBEL.

VOLUME I.

THE DAILY REBEL  
PUBLISHED BY  
Franc. M. Paul.

SUNDAY MORNING, MARCH 29, 1863.

From the Savannah Republican  
Our Western Army Correspondence—Letter  
From Middle Tennessee.

ATTEMPT TO SURROUND AND CAPTURE VAN DORN  
—HIS SUCCESSFUL ESCAPE—A NIGHT'S MARCH  
—DISCOMFITS OF THE ENEMY—THE POSITION.

COLUMBIA, Tenn., March 13th.

In my last letter I gave you very full the disposition of Van Dorn's force upon Rutherford Creek, where he had taken position to meet the enemy. On the 10th we had retired from Spring Hill before a large force of the enemy, and were in a dangerous position and expected on the 11th to have an engagement of short duration and retire across Duck river to this point on a pontoon bridge, which was then constructed and about to be launched. Upon attempting to launch it, it was discovered to be impossible, as the river had overflowed its banks, and was sweeping on with the greatest rapidity, bearing in its bosom huge logs and drift wood, hurried down with such velocity as to render the laying down of the pontoon an utter impossibility.

To render matters still worse, the rope by means of which the ferry boat was crossed became submerged, and another one was with difficulty stretched across, by means of which we were enabled to cross a boat capable of carrying at each trip, occupying forty minutes, one wagon or eight or ten horses. Placed in this unfortunate position, we were completely covered by Federal's in heavy force in front and upon both flanks, without having any means of retreat in case of a superior force, which was certain, and which was only our intention to engage and retire. Several plans of escape were suggested, among which the most plausible was to swim the horses across the stream and cross the troops by the ferry, but it was found that even this was impracticable. Our position was at the head of the peninsula formed by the junction of Carter's creek and Duck river, while the enemy's position was upon another peninsula directly opposite, formed by the junction of Rutherford and Carter's creek, all of which streams were unusually high and well nigh impassible.

The picture of misery was so perfect, the look of disgust so indescribable, and the chartering tones so warning, that at this moment could the most disatisfied infantry man ambition of riding a horse even him, we doubt whether he would have "joined the cavalry." Daylight revealed to us the Lewisburg pike, and the head of the command reached Lewisburg during the morning. At this point Van Dorn received despatches from Polk, which should have reached him at his position before the enemy, informing him that on the night of the 10th Jefferson C. Davis, of the Yankee army, marched with a division from Eagleville at midnight, and another from Erlinton at the same time, with a view to cutting him off. General Polk's opinion was, that these two divisions, sent from Murfreesboro, together with the divisions of Granger and Sheridan, which were in our front, on Rutherford's creek, were out with a view to the catching of Van Dorn's whole force, as the enemy had learned that we had been unsuccessful in bridging Duck river and knew that at its length we could not do it. We then left Lewisburg at noon and reached this point at dark last evening, fully expecting to find the enemy across the creek engaging our batteries upon this side, which had been instructed to prevent the enemy from bridging the river and crossing. Upon arrival here it was found that the enemy moved cautiously forward, fully assured that their trap was successful, until they reached the river at nightfall on the 11th, to find that their edge was not close enough to hold the golden bird. When they became aware that Van Dorn had passed out by their flank, they retraced their steps at a double quick to Franklin, destroying fences, corn and fodder as they went, and telling the citizens that Van Dorn had got out upon their rear and was attempting to capture Franklin and destroy their trains, but they would catch him. When Van Dorn arrived here, having passed so successfully around them, and traveled 70 miles in 36 hours, to reach a point only two miles distant, he learned that the enemy were not only deceived in regard to catching him napping but concerning his whereabouts and expecting him at Franklin.

It is clear from the actions of the enemy that my surmises in regard to Rosecrans attempting summarily to change his base were incorrect, and that finding a strong mobile force, with artillery, under Van Dorn, threatening them at any and every weak point, and having learned from the Spring Hill affair what he could do, Rosecrans conceived the idea of trapping my whole command, and thus getting rid of his troublesome presence, with a view which he detached me less or important an expedition than four divisions of his command, amounting to 30,000 men, to effect his capture, and he has now found himself further than ever from success, and is at this moment expecting Van Dorn at many points. To successfully defend an enemy, outside him, and escape from so admirable a trait, military ingenuity is characterized with more than ordinary skill and ability. The enemy's command, we may think they were crossing a turnpike instead of a rapid stream, so hastily did they effect it. At 10 o'clock A. M., this brigade and Crosby's, which had been upon our left, were withdrawn through the woods, so as to avoid being seen by the Yankee look-outs, leaving their usual out-posts behind, and started upon a road running along the Duck river in a Northwesterly direction. Forrest's command were upon another road, running parallel with it, and Armstrong brought up the rear, with Van Dorn and staff, and escort immediately in the rear of Crosby, so as to be in a position to direct movements either in front or rear in case the enemy attempted to intercept us. Everything was now underway, the artillery and wagon trains having been crossed upon the ferry and the animals swam, the position completely evacuated, save by the outposts and pickets, who were directed to withdraw, so soon as we got fairly under way or the enemy should advance.

We are now upon the retreat, and the one my unaware of our having left, and most of the command ignorant as to our destination. At H. C. Cross Roads, where the Franklin and Murfreesboro roads come together, and within a few miles of which we passed, a division of the enemy, under Sheridan, was re-

SUNDAY MORNING, MARCH 29, 1863.

NUMBER 201.

From the Richmond Whig.]

"OH, HE'S NOTHING BUT A SOLDIER."

BY A. YOUNG, BESIDE, ENQ.

"Oh, he's nothing but a soldier.  
But he's coming here to-night?  
For I saw him pass this morning.  
With his uniform so bright.  
He was coming in fine picket.  
With his sword and sabre strain.  
And he knew his hand and none one  
Peeping through the window pane.

Ab, he rode no dashing charger.  
With a black and dawning morn,  
But his bayonets glinted brightly.  
All the world in front of the pinto.  
No waving plumes or feathers.  
Flashed its crimson in the light.  
He belongs to the light Infantry.  
And he came to war—to fight!

"Oh, he's nothing but a soldier.  
He's from—no, he's from—  
To carry me, why to go?  
Through that sev'le Yankee horde.  
No pom-poms, peacock heralds him.  
No—no—no—no—  
In his belt yes see his body guard.  
His trusty and trusty sword.

"Oh, he's nothing but a soldier.  
And a straggler to our lands.  
He is home in sunny Sun.  
By the blue Gulf's golden strand;  
But I well know his people.  
Some little of his past,  
For father's always telling me  
About our olden east.

"Oh, he's nothing but a soldier.  
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